

Horse News and Views



- ◆ John Madigan and his co-researchers from the University of California have provided a new piece to the puzzle of Potomac Horse Fever (PHF). *Ehrlichia risticii*, the agent of Potomac Horse Fever, is maintained in nature in a complex aquatic ecosystem. Transmission to horses can occur through accidental ingestion of insects such as caddisflies containing infected metacercariae (the intermediary form of trematode parasites). Immature and adult forms of caddisflies, mayflies, damselflies, dragonflies, and stoneflies were found to contain infected metacercariae. (Equine Vet J 2000 Jul;32(4):273-4, J Med Entomol 2000 Jul;37(4):619-625.) Further research will need to determine if PHF is seen in years when these insects are at the peak of their life cycle; if changes to grazing management may have an effect; and if the infected flies remain infective in stored feed.
- ◆ Horse owners are often surprised and disgusted when the bottom row of hay bales in their single-storey barns becomes moldy. Moisture from the ground will move upwards, even through concrete floors. Horse owners have used skids and plastic on the floor with disappointing results. To prevent this substantial loss, place plastic vapour barrier on the ground prior to laying the concrete floors. In addition, place one foot of shavings over the concrete prior to storing the bales on the floor. This will prevent hay wastage and the shavings will be used up as the hay is fed.
- ◆ On March 15 and 16, the University of Guelph will be open to the general public in a campus-wide open house. 'College Royal' is a student run and organized event and the largest university open house of its kind in North America. The University of Guelph invites you and your family to come and enjoy the weekend of activities. For more information refer to their web site, <http://www.collegeroyal.uoguelph.ca/>

For further information contact Dr. Bob Wright (519) 846-3412 or visit our website: <http://www.gov.on.ca/omafra/english/livestock>



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Horse News and Views is prepared by
Dr. Bob Wright, Veterinary Science,
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food,
Wellington Place, R.R. #1, Fergus, Ontario N1M 2W3
Telephone: 519-846-3412 Fax: 519-846-8101
Email: robert.wright@omaf.gov.on.ca

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